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THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

National Intelligence Council

22 October 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

THROUGH : National Intelligence Officer for Warning

FROM : David D. Gries
National Intelligence Officer for East Asia

SUBJECT : East Asia Warning Assessment

The following items were discussed by the Community Representatives at the 21 October warning meeting.

North Korean War Preparation

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Some analysts are inclined to interpret the references to "war preparations" as reflecting North Korea's persistent war time psychology. Others tend to view the references as possibly suggesting an attempt by the North to increase its capabilities for initiating hostilities -- perhaps in the near term. The analysts were in general agreement, however, that more information and research will be required to set this material in context. In particular, there is a need to ascertain to what extent -- if any -- it bears a direct relationship to the ongoing efforts by the North to upgrade and expand its military performance and capabilities. [REDACTED] 25X1

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Thailand: Coup Rumors

Rumors of coup plotting against General Prem have proven to have no substance. They appear to reflect nervousness within the military about the gathering of senior officers at a time when General Prem and many of the senior Government leaders were out of the country. There is, however, an undercurrent of resentment within the military about Prem's rapid advancement of General Athit and his handling of the annual military promotions generally. There are no indications at this point that political or economic pressures are causing the various dissatisfied elements -- particularly within the RTA -- to coalesce against Prem. In fact, Prem's willingness to leave the country with so many of his senior officials may reflect an increased measure of self-confidence in his position. []

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Philippines: Internal Difficulties

Despite reassuring comments to the US, President Marcos appears increasingly concerned about the growth of domestic unrest both among student groups and perhaps more importantly the Communist Party of the Philippines/New Peoples Army (CCP/NPA). Thus far, Marcos has dealt effectively and firmly with the rash of student demonstrations which are a late summer phenomenon and appears to have contained the situation for the present. There continue to be reports, however, of links between student organizations (as well as some labor groups) and front organizations of the CPP which could spell additional trouble in the near term. []

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NPA activity is of greater concern. Though still largely concentrated in remote, impoverished regions, the activity has increased and spread significantly since the lifting of martial law, and the numbers of insurgents and supporters appear to be on the rise. At this stage the NPA does not

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pose a significant threat to the regime. Nonetheless its increased activity has caused the Government to shift some of its military resources from the fighting against the MNLF in Mindanao where there appears to be a stalemate at present. The fact that the Government is highlighting the NPA activity and Government counterpressures in the media also tends to underscore its sensitivity to the increased insurgent pressure. []

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